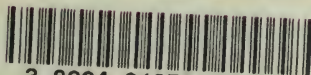


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LANDMARKS OF HISTORY.

BY

WILLIAM JOHNSTON, M.A., LL.B.

Victoria University, Cobourg, Ontario.



TORONTO:
WILLIAM BRIGGS,
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“HOW came I thus; how here?” mused Father Adam in the garden of Eden; and ever since that time man has continued to ask himself this question. Many have been the attempts to draw aside the veil that separates the Known from the Unknown, and to reveal the secrets of that bourne whence no traveller e’er returns. But the mystery of life is as mysterious now as it was when Eden bloomed in primeval beauty. “How came I thus; how here?” is still a question unanswered; but, although we cannot stand within the inner veil and explore the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God, or penetrate the secret of being, we can gaze in admiration and rapture upon the objects of His handiwork, and, it may be, become acquainted with his character by studying His dealings with man, who is the noblest of all His works.

If it be true that “history repeats itself,” and that “we can read the future in the light of the past,” then, indeed, must the study of history be profitable. The poet sings:

“Thus fought the Greeks of old,
Thus will they fight again;
Shall not the self-same mould
Bring forth the self-same men?”

But, alas! alas! we all know that the Greeks of to-day are

degenerate descendants of the heroes of Thermopylæ and Marathon. Byron wrote in mournful strain :

“The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece !
 Where burning Sappho loved and sung ;
 Where grew the arts of war and peace,
 Where Delos rose and Phœbus sprung !
 Eternal summer gilds them yet,
 But all, except their sun, is set.”

And Anthon tells us “that the geographical situation of Greece was eminently favorable to the development of intellectual power, and to that peculiarly nice organization by which delicacy of feeling is refined even to fastidiousness.” But climatic influence does not now produce great men in Greece. Her national glory has long since passed away, and only her *sun*—that is, the light of her learning—continues to shine with undimmed splendor. The circle of eternal change, which is the law of nature, admonishes us that the past is gone forever ; that a nation has its periods of infancy, youth, manhood and old age ; and that when the winter of life settles down upon the barren land, the creative faculty of man can neither bud nor blossom. But as the life of an individual may be prolonged by observance of the rules of health, so may the life of a state, by giving attention to certain great principles which may not be violated with impunity. The philosophy of history applies those principles. It gives a reason for the rise and fall of states. It postulates that every effect must have an adequate cause ; and, hence, that any historical event is the natural effect of its cause.

In attempting to give, what seemed to me, the prominent features of one of the greatest of all great events, I shall constantly keep before me the *cause* and the *effect*, my object being to illustrate the educational value of history by showing that the Renaissance was the fountain-head of all the springs of social, political and religious reform which revived, refreshed and invigorated the fainting nations of the sixteenth century. The lessons taught by the study of this period of history are pregnant with great truths, and it is my aim to

present them in a spirit of fairness and with due regard to the feelings of those who may not agree with me on several important points bearing upon the Renaissance, in so far as it may be considered a religious revival.

It was the year of grace 1453. The Eastern Roman Empire had flourished a thousand years. Safe from the barbarian hordes—the Goths, the Huns, the Vandals—who had overrun Western Europe, Constantinople looked down, proudly and defiantly upon the Golden Horn. The wit, the eloquence, the learning of ancient Greece and Rome were here studied by a race of men who held dear the memories of the glorious and heroic past; but the evil day came when this relic of a bygone age fell a prey to the rapacious and fanatical Turk. Splendid villas, magnificent temples, and hoary libraries alike suffered destruction at the hands of the conquering infidel.

Fleeing westward, with their treasured rolls of papyrus or parchment, the exiled Greek scholars found a home in Florence, Pisa, Rome, and other cities of Western Europe. The Renaissance had begun.

The new birth of literature ushered in an intellectual as opposed to a superstitious reign. The bands of superstition and ignorance, which had so long held in chains the nations of Europe, were fast melting under the genial rays of this new sun which had just arisen in the intellectual heavens. Again the fiat had gone forth from the throne of Omnipotence, "Behold, *old* things are passed away, and all things are *new*."

The allegorical instruction and religious trappings of the monastic Middle Ages were ruthlessly swept away by the leaders of the Renaissance. The *intellectual* was substituted for the *ceremonial*. "A vivid realization of the person of Christ" was pure religion and undefiled. To know Christ and Him crucified was the unalienable inheritance of every man and woman. The Bible was to be an open book, and every reader of it his own interpreter.

The poetry, the philosophy, the politics of Greece and Rome were now studied with as much zeal as were the Gest books

during the Dark Ages. The poetry of Homer, the tragedy of Sophocles, the phillipics of Demosthenes, the politics of Plato and Aristotle, stood side by side with the works of Virgil, Ovid, Cicero and Cæsar.

Great scholars from the Continent—among whom Grocyn, Colet, Linacre and Erasmus stand in the first rank—brought the new learning to England, in which safe retreat it flourished with a vigor and productiveness far surpassing its growth in any other part of Europe; for the separation of England from the Continent by a physical barrier promoted the growth of the peaceful arts and sciences, at a time when the nations of the Continent were plunged in ruinous wars and intestine strife.

The political and social influence of the Renaissance is best seen in More's "Utopia." Coming from the pen of one of the most gifted of the politicians and statesmen of that period, it may be taken as embodying the leading principles of advanced thought on social and political science. The piercing, gray eyes, the thin, mobile lips, the intelligent and irregular features, the restless activity, the tumbled brown hair, the negligent dress of the young lawyer who, at the age of twenty-three, had sufficient influence in the English Parliament to cause the refusal of the king's request for a subsidy, could not fail to leave the impression upon the most careless observer that this beardless boy was destined to play an important part on the stage of human action. The name of Sir Thomas More will ever be revered by those who prize honor and virtue above the external advantages of rank and fortune. Done to death by a besotted king and his licentious queen, he passed calmly to the scaffold, rather than do violence to his conscience by acknowledging the religious validity of the marriage of King Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn. From a writer of such nobility of nature we should expect exalted sentiments on social and political questions. Accordingly, More informs us that in England laws are made in the interest of the wealthy and for the purpose of oppressing the poor; but in Utopia—this dreamland of nowhere—the poor have

more advantages than the rich: that all must labor and all partake of the fruit of labor. In England, half the population could not read; in Utopia, all are well instructed. The religion of Utopia is simple and sincere. Its centre is in the family, rather than in the priest. Complete religious toleration prevails in Utopia, because "it is not in man's power to believe what he list." In Utopia, the law *prevents*, rather than *punishes*, crime. The *certainly* of punishment, consequent upon the committal of crime, greatly lessens the *severity*. To hang a man for theft is merely tempting the thief to become a murderer; therefore, punishment should be proportionate to the magnitude of the offence. Such are the great questions discussed by this enlightened statesmen, with a penetration and Christian philanthropy far in advance of the popular sentiment of that time, and, indeed, in several respects, in advance of our own more favored age. Truly, the suffering poor of England might exclaim, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand;" and the succeeding outburst of national song gave expression to the joy of an emancipated people.

But the light of the new learning was now glimmering far from the shores of Italy and England. It had penetrated the forests of Germany and illuminated the mind of Copernicus, in the quiet town of Thorn, by the dark and sluggish Vistula. Boldly discarding the Ptolemaic System, which had stood the test of ages, Copernicus revealed the secret of the universe. Astonishment and delight filled the hearts of men. Groping for ages in doubt and uncertainty, they had now come to the light. Enlarged views of God and God's works quickened man's intelligence, and redoubled his efforts in search of truth. The Pope might pronounce the believers of the new system accursed, but that did not crush it; for, *veritas praevalerebit*; Galileo might recant and affirm that the earth does not move, but men believe that it moves, nevertheless.

And now the spirit of discovery has taken possession of man. He must know more about this world, if he cannot reveal the secrets of "that undiscovered country from which no traveller has ever returned." But who dare venture beyond the pillars of Hercules, and stem the billows of the dread Atlantic? And, in the fulness of time, Christopher Columbus comes forth and answers, I will. And this directs our attention to the Moslem occupation in Spain.

At a time when England, France and Italy were shrouded in intellectual darkness, a Moorish kingdom, situated in the south of Spain, gave literature, science and art to the students of

Europe. The period of her greatest glory and prosperity was the tenth century. While England was torn by the Danish invasions, the broad lands of Rahman and Hakem bloomed, fruitful as a garden. The valleys of Guadalquiver and Xenil produced grain, mulberry trees and sugar-cane; luscious fruits clothed the hill-sides; roads, canals and aqueducts spread a network of industry over the land. She sent her silks and sword-blades, her woollen goods and dyed leather, her linens and cottons, to the bazaars of Egypt, Constantinople and India. Thriving towns and graceful cities dotted the fair domains of the swarthy Moor, lordly universities reared their massive fronts in all the cities. Here flocked students from all parts of Europe, to study mathematics, astronomy, chemistry and medicine, under the Arab professors. But the mosque of Mahomet crowned every hill-top, and the devout Moslem turned his face five times a day towards Mecca, and prayed to *Allah*. There could be no peace between Rome and the infidel; and hence the Pope commissioned Christian Spain to expel the Moor, and take possession of his territory.

Thus was begun a war which lasted, with many interruptions, nearly eight centuries; and which was waged with so much chivalry, that its romantic incidents still linger, in poetry and song, among the hills of Southern Spain. The prowess and magnanimous conduct of El Seid bear a striking resemblance to the achievements of Prince Arthur: each is an intensified realization of the spirit of a warlike age, in which love and hatred, humanity and cruelty, beauty and deformity, are mixed in inextricable confusion. With varying fortune the war went on, until, in the year 1212, the Moors suffered a crushing defeat in the great battle of Navas de Tolosa. This defeat was followed by the capture of the Moorish capital, Cordova, in 1236; and Granada then became the seat of Moslem power in Spain. Here, for two centuries and a half, the crescent flag floated over the lovely city of Granada. Eastward were seen the snow-clad peaks of the Sierra Nevada; southward, as far as the eye could reach, lay a fertile plain, irrigated by innumerable rills, drawn from the river which meandered through it; while high above the loftiest dome of her many stately palaces, arose the giant columns of the gorgeous Alhambra.

And, so, the Emirate of Granada continued to thrive among the hills overlooking the Mediterranean; the kings of Portugal, Navarre, Castile, Arragon and Leon being too busily engaged in defending their own possessions, against each other, to undertake any great war against their infidel neighbors.

But, when Leon became part of Castile, and Arragon was united with Castile, under Ferdinand of Arragon and Isabella of Castile, it looked as if union would produce strength, and that the infidel must quit the soil of Spain. And thus, in 1479, the whole of Spain, except Navarre and Granada acknowledged the sovereignty of this illustrious king and queen.

Christianity, still smarting under the disgrace inflicted upon it by the extinction of the Eastern Empire, called loudly for war against the followers of Mahomet. The thunders of the Vatican pealed forth their notes, to encourage the Christian, and strike consternation into the heart of the Moor; and Ferdinand set out to conquer Granada, strengthened by the blessing of the Pope and the acclaims of his loyal and devoted subjects. For ten years the strife was continued. Brave was the resistance of the Moors; many the feats of valor performed by both parties. Year after year saw the circle of Moorish territory contract, until the surviving population was forced in upon the city of Granada. In six months famine had done its work, and then the Emir Abdallah made honorable terms of capitulation with the conqueror. Then, "down from Alhambra's minarets were all the crescents flung." A few hours, and Abdallah reined in his steed on a rocky hill, which is still called, "The Last Sign of the Moor," to take one long farewell of Granada. His eyes were filled with tears. "Well doth it become thee," cried his mother, "to weep like a woman for what thou couldst not defend as a man."

On the second day of January, in the year 1492, the war against the Moor ended; and on the third day of August of the same year, Columbus left the shores of Spain, bound on his ever-memorable voyage of discovery. And here the question may be asked, what caused Spain to grant to Columbus the assistance which Italy, Venice, Portugal and England had refused? The answer undoubtedly is, that the national joy, produced by the union of the kingdoms of Arragon and Castile, added to the expulsion of the Moors, found expression in the act of magnanimity and Christian philanthropy. The chivalry of Spain had not yet been blasted by the infernal Inquisition.

That Spain, prior to the institution of the Inquisition, possessed in some measure "that sensibility of principle which feels a stain like a wound" may be inferred from the metrical romances of the Middle Ages. Thus the hero of the "Cid" is the ideal feudal knight. He hates falsehood, treachery, and ingratitude—which were the great social crimes of that age;

and he protects woman, respects the sanctity of home, and fosters literature and the arts, which were a knight's great virtues. Roderigo Diez, Count of Bivar, is simply to Spain what Prince Arthur is to England, William Wallace to Scotland, Hermann to Germany, and William Tell to Switzerland—a national hero personifying the struggles of a people for political and intellectual freedom.

Again, the Renaissance claims our attention. "Greece has crossed the Alps," exclaimed the patriotic exile Argyropulos, on hearing a translation of Thucydides by the German scholar Reuchlin. The rays of the new knowledge were streaming across the Black Forest, and they were soon to penetrate the homes of Saxony, and illuminate the tops of the Thuringian mountains. Martin Luther was fully persuaded that "the just shall live by faith." The great principles of the new learning, as far as they pertained to religion, had taken possession of the soul of Luther; and henceforth to know Christ was his only aim in life, and his only hope in death. "Drop a penny in my box for some poor wretch in purgatory," cried the seller of Indulgences; "and the moment it clinks in the bottom the freed soul flies up to heaven." Luther resolved "to beat a hole in the vendor's drum." He formulated his objections to the sale of Indulgences in ninety-five propositions, the essence of which was that there can be no salvation without repentance. He sent a copy of his theses to the Archbishop of Madgeburg, and nailed another, signed with his name, on the gate of the castle church of Wittenberg. Luther had hurled defiance in the face of Rome; let him beware the consequence. At first, mild means were employed to seduce him from the truth, and to win him back to the Papacy. Cajetan, a subtle Italian, tried all his arts upon the champion of religious freedom; but Luther was immovable. Then the thunders of Rome broke upon the head of Luther. Anathema maranatha was pronounced upon him. He was excommunicated; but Luther defiantly replied by burning the Bull that was expected to destroy him. A few months afterwards he appeared, at Worms, before the Emperor Charles V. "Go to Worms, I shall," cried the hero of the Reformation, "though the devils there were as numerous as the tiles on their housetops." Fearlessly did the man of God discuss the great questions of life, truth and immortality before the youthful emperor and the assembled nobility of Spain and Germany. Utterly futile were the efforts of the advocates of the old religion to induce Luther to recant, or retract anything he had

spoken or written on the question of religion. He closed a two-hours' speech, in Latin and German, with the following brave words: "Unless I am convinced by Scripture and reason, I neither can nor dare retract anything; for my conscience is a captive to God's Word, and it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. Here, I take my stand; I can do no otherwise. So help me God." "Then the mighty emperor was wroth, and doubled up his hands, and said: "You will not, Luther! you dare to answer thus! But in my father's time an emperor's word was law, and so it shall be now for me. Look to it; consider, Luther. Take an hour to think, and let me have an answer to my wish, or, by the Lord that made me, you shall pack, and never more darken my doors again." But God helped Luther, and he was dismissed from the presence of the emperor, who caused proclamation to be made, "that all pious and sensible men deem this Luther a madman, or one possessed by the devil;" and all his loyal subjects were forbidden "to harbor the said Luther and to give him food and drink."

Cursed by Rome and banned by the emperor, Luther took his departure from Worms, resolved to visit once more the scenes of his childhood. He preached in Eisenach, the place of his school-boy days, and then journeyed to the village of Mora, his father's birthplace. Here, one day of sweet tranquillity was spent in the society of his relations and friends. On the morrow he set out for Eislaben, the place of his birth; but while skirting the Thuringian forest he was seized by a body of masked men—five in number, the originals have it—and hurried away to the castle of Wartburg, which crowned the summit of a rocky eminence in the middle of the forest.

To those who have read the "Maid of the Mist," there will seem nothing strange in this apparently miraculous disappearance of Luther, at a time when it was treason to give him food or shelter. The work was doubtless that of the Holy Vehme—a secret society which is generally identified with the Masonry of the Middle Ages, and which was at that time at the height of its power in Germany. It speaks well for friendship that Luther was imprisoned by his friends, not his enemies; and that the Elector of Saxony was the friend who stood between the defenceless Luther and enraged Rome is all but certain.

In his retreat of Wartburg castle, Luther remained many months, disguised as a knight, spending his time as best he could, in hawking, hunting and reading. In this lonely prison Luther began the translation of the Bible into German, and he

had completed the New Testament at the time of his liberation.

The battle still raged, and the followers of Luther daily became more numerous. The Papacy stemmed the tide by correcting many of the most glaring abuses, and the Reformers retarded their own noble cause by neglecting to practise that toleration they exacted from others. Luther himself, at the end of an eventful and noble life, felt "that the world was weary of him and that he was weary of the world." So also felt Charles V. Both expected too much from the world in which their lot was cast. Both endeavored to mould men in accordance with their imperious will, and both failed. Charles was bent on universal conquest by *force of arms*; Luther, by *force of reason*. Charles retired in despair from the turmoil of treachery, intrigue and diplomacy which seethed all around him and daily threatened to engulf him; Luther was weary of the world because Zwingli, Calvin and Melancthon differed from him and from each other on certain questions pertaining to church government and religious belief. Luther lay down to die, dissatisfied with the work he had done; but his work continued to live after him. He had broken the power of Rome. An open Bible, in the mother-tongue, placed before a people hungering for the Bread of Life, was the priceless bequest of Luther to the rich and poor of his Fatherland. Charles V. cast off his royal robes and placed his crown upon the head of an unworthy son; and, as a last official act, enjoined upon that son the paramount duty of extirpating heresy throughout the length and breadth of his wide dominions. The father's hatred of Protestantism was intensified in that of his son. Deceitful, cruel and heartless, he abused all the means which God and nature had put into his hands to accomplish the ruin of the new religion. But the work of Luther stood firm as the iron will of its founder; for it was founded upon the immutable principles of freedom, of righteousness, and of truth. Centuries have gone by since Luther and his great antagonist were gathered to their fathers. "They rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." A Protestant nation, great in everything that constitutes true greatness, attests the nobleness of the work of Luther. A nation fallen from her high estate; a people, *then* the most polished of Europe, *now*, so low that none are poor enough to do them reverence, attests the baseness of the work of Charles V. "Men may come and men may go, but I go on forever," whispers the shade of Luther in the ear of Christianity. "Vex not his ghost; oh, let him pass. He hates him

much who would on the rack of this tough world stretch him out longer," is the prayer of every true follower of Christ for the poor and lonely king who did so much to destroy Luther and Protestantism.

Italy, Spain and France felt the influence of the Renaissance; and during the first half century of its growth, it flourished in those countries in all the vigor of pristine luxuriance. But the principles of the Renaissance differed widely from the practice of Rome, and soon the Papacy became the enemy of the new Greek philosophy. The social reformation advocated by the Renaissance would necessarily produce religious reformation; and the revival of literature was inseparably bound up in the regeneration of religion. Hence, the Renaissance was the mainspring of religious reformation; and as such met with a determined opposition from the Vatican. Italy, although the cradle of the Renaissance, was scarcely touched by the Reformation. Rome was too powerful for any religious reform to live within her borders. In Spain it blazed out a brief life of glory, and perished in the dungeons of the Inquisition. In France it played an important part, on a political stage, and then retired, to reappear in the great drama of French Protestantism. The year which added a New World to the Old World saw the feudal system of France abolished, and all her provinces consolidated into a great kingdom. Its social power was, perhaps, seen many years afterwards in "the terrible awakening" which caused Europe to shudder, "and monarchs to tremble within their capitals," when the young and beautiful king and queen of France perished on the scaffold. Its influence upon religion must have been deep and lasting, for the lawgiver of the Reformed Church was a Frenchman. But the heart of French Protestantism was broken by the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the sun of the new light sank beneath the horizon of France, red with the blood of the Huguenots.

In the Netherlands the political strength of the Renaissance is seen in its greatest power and glory. The heroic struggle of the father of the Dutch Republic was the admiration of the world. The Dutch struggle for freedom is not surpassed, perhaps not equalled, by any other patriotic war recorded in history. The annals of the terrible cruelties of the Spanish soldiers resemble the wildest creations of fiction, rather than the sober narrative of history. The duplicity and perfidy of Philip II. is only surpassed by the butcheries of Alva. The compact between the kings of France and Spain to crush the Reformation in their dominions and subdue the Netherlands is

worthy of the king who caused fifty thousand of his subjects to be murdered, and assisted in the butchery with his own hand. The joy of Philip when he was informed of the massacre of St. Bartholomew resembles the laughter of a fiend. The huge murderer—this French Herod—is christened the “Most Christian king,” and thanked by the Pope for his zeal in exterminating heretics. What wailing in Dutch-land when the news of St. Bartholomew passed from cottage to cottage, over the length and breadth of the Netherlands! How the people of England stood aghast at the enormity of Louis and Philip, and blessed the virgin queen who gave them political and religious freedom! And when, a few years later, the Spanish Armada threatened the shores of England and the roar of hostile cannon was heard in many an English home, the memory of St. Bartholomew nerved Protestant and Roman Catholic alike to drive from British seas the bloodthirsty and detestable invader.

Protestantism was extirpated in France, but it yet lived in England and the Netherlands. William the Silent, Prince of Orange, will die disputing the last ditch; and so the power of Spain battles in vain against the brave Hollander, who will sink his country under the surrounding ocean rather than surrender it to the merciless Spaniard. And when, in 1584, William the Silent fell a victim to the bullet of the hired assassin of Philip, enough had been done in the cause of freedom to render futile any further attempt of Spain to hold the brave little republic in bondage; and she then took rank among the nations of Europe. The principles of the Renaissance had triumphed in the Netherlands. The heart of her hero is still in death; but from the grave of the murdered patriot there arises a spectre “more terrible than an army with banners.” It is the *Spirit of Freedom*. Her home is now by the grave of William of Orange.

Returning to England, we find the new learning the companion of the noble, the instructor of the student, and the benefactor of the laborer. Its effects upon religion were radical and revolutionary. On the continent, especially in Germany, the Reformation was purely religious in its character, that is, it did not effect any change in the constitution or laws. In England it was quite otherwise; the movement having more of the political than the religious in it. In England the Reformation produced a political revolution as well as a religious reformation. In Germany it produced a great religious reformation without effecting any political reform. In England

political unity made political reform attainable; in Germany the multiplicity of separate states rendered political reform impossible; while in France and Spain popular representation was so defective that no political reformation could be effected. In England the Reformation separated the Church from Rome, reformed and purified the English Church, established a national system of middle-class education, and laid the groundwork of England's future glory and greatness, by fostering a spirit of national self-reliance and political and spiritual independence. True, the first clause of the oldest Act on the Statute Book of England—Magna Charta—declares that the Church of England shall be free, and under the common law of England the king was head of the Church; but it was not until the Act of Supremacy—which was merely declaratory of the common law—declared that the king of England is head of the Church, that the severance of the English Church from the Church of Rome was complete. The subsequent dissolution of the monasteries broke the power of the Church; and the distribution of their hoarded wealth among the needy courtiers most effectually prevented re-establishment. Whatever may be said respecting this wanton violence of the crown, there can be little doubt that the dissolution of the monasteries has been exceedingly beneficial to the people of England. If it is necessary to protect by law him who is in fear of death from the undue influence of his spiritual adviser—and that is the force of the statute of Mortmain—how much more necessary was it at that time to protect the state from the power of a wealthy and arrogant priesthood?

The establishment of the Grammar Schools immediately after the dissolution of the monasteries, doubtless, gave employment to many a penniless monk who had been reduced to beggary by the rapacity of the court and king. But the great benefit derived from those schools was that they provided the means of education for the middle class, which is now the ruling body in England. The English High Schools and Collegiate Institutes (applying the language of Ontario) arose upon the ruins of the monasteries.

The social side of the Renaissance is seen in the growth of the middle class. The decay of the feudal system, the extension of commerce, and the introduction of better methods of farming, prepared the mental soil of England for the reception of the seed of intellectual freedom; but it was the Renaissance sunlight which brought the struggling plantlet to maturity. The example of the royal wool merchant did much

to encourage agriculture. While the English soldier was winning imperishable glory on the battlefields of Crecy and Poitiers, the English merchant was laying the foundation of England's wealth by the exportation of wool to the Continent. English woollen factories studded the shores of the Baltic and the North Sea. Flemish weavers flocked to the manufacturing towns on the east coast of England. Flanders was the market of the world. Merchants from seventeen kingdoms were domiciled in her capital, Bruges. The Hanse towns controlled commerce the world over. And so it continued from the days of Edward III. to the end of the fifteenth century. Then the discovery of America, and also of a water route to the East Indies, diverted trade from its well-worn channel, and England profited at the expense of her formidable rivals. Antwerp, Bruges, Lubec, Bremen suffered from European trade with the Indies, and the wars produced by the Reformation completed their ruin. The immediate extension of English trade was the natural result of the decline of the continental trade, and this was yearly increased by the great peace which England enjoyed from the end of the Wars of the Roses to the beginning of the Civil War in the reign of Charles I.

And may we not pause here to contemplate the wisdom of an overruling Providence which delayed the destruction of the Hanseatic commerce until England was prepared to continue the work which the Hanse towns had abandoned forever? Had that decline taken place while England was distracted by the Wars of the Roses, could the trade have been continued by English merchants? But, when Antwerp fell a prey to the Spanish soldier, England was fully prepared to receive at her ports the commerce of the world. The social influence of the Renaissance did much to make that preparation. It recognized the fundamental law of our being, that labor is the lot of man, and that mental exertion without manual effort is of no avail. It dignified labor. The spirit of Cincinnatus bade the English farmer enjoy the fruit of his labor. The story of Jason and the Golden Fleece tempted many an English mariner to explore the unknown ocean. The industry, the simplicity, the constancy, the maternity of the Greek and Roman matrons was emulated by the mothers of England. And, above all, the Renaissance, as a social force, gave to woman that protection which chivalry had so long striven to throw around her. And to us who enjoy all the social blessings which have emanated from it, there comes a song of gladness across the intervening

centuries; and as we catch the strain, we send back to the joyous people of dear old Merrie England the glad refrain,

“For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.”

But beneath the merchant and the yeoman was a class sunk in the deepest misery and degradation. “When a man loses his liberty he loses half his virtue,” was the sentence of Homer, and experience tells us that such is the case. And it was literally true of the laboring class of England. Sprung from the serfs of Saxon England and the villeins of the feudal system, they were, at the beginning of the Tudor period, in a social condition which was not far removed from slavery. The Black Death, in 1350, made fearful ravages among the laborers. Downtrodden for many generations, they were now, for once, masters of the situation. They were in a position to dictate to their masters terms of service. Armed with cudgel or pike, they were beggars by day and highwaymen by night. The “Risings,” which were so frequent until the reign of Elizabeth, drew the principal part of their forces from those “Sturdy Beggars.” But the master would not submit to the insolent terms of his servant. He applied to Parliament for relief, and received assistance in the Statute of Laborers, which became law in 1356. This most iniquitous Act made it compulsory upon laborers who were out of service to accept employment from any master, on being tendered such wages as were paid two years before the Black Death. Many were the subsequent Acts passed to enforce this obnoxious statute. The condition of the laborer became yearly more utterly wretched, until he might envy the life of the brute. In this condition the Renaissance found him; and from the dawn of its light upon the people of England his comforts were increased, his morals were elevated, and his intelligence was brightened. Sir Thomas More pleaded for him in the highest of all courts—*in foro conscientie*; and when the great commercial era dawned upon England, constant employment was given to the hitherto famishing laborer. But it remained for “Good Queen Bess” to put on solid footing a definite system for the relief of the poor of England. A distinction was made for the first time between the “sturdy beggar”—the *tramp* we would say—and the pauper; that is, between the beggar who was able to work and him who was not able. The old law of forcing labor upon the able-bodied beggar was retained; and Houses of Correction were established in which labor was provided for that purpose,

while the support of the pauper was placed upon the parish to which he belonged, and the churchwardens were made collectors of the rate necessary for his maintenance. Such was the first effective Poor Law. In the forty-third year of Elizabeth the Poor Laws were consolidated into one consistent body, which was the basis of all subsequent legislation affecting the poor of England.

The counsellors of Elizabeth had again given proof of their wisdom. On many an intricate question they had given counsel, when national honor and political freedom were at stake. But here was a question concerning which humanity and the peace of the realm demanded thoughtful consideration and far-reaching wisdom. And again, English statesmen were to triumph. The wail of the poor is heard no more by the reader of English history. Agrarian discontent lingers only among the dim shadows of the past, and the sons of the "starving poor" of Elizabeth's reign are to become the Ironsides of Cromwell and the colonizers of the wilderness of New England. "All men are by nature free and equal," argued Sir Thomas More before the despotic Henry VIII. "All men are by nature free and equal," cried Oliver Cromwell, as he dashed through the Royalist ranks on the plain of Naseby; and Miles Standish, standing on Plymouth Rock, shouts back, "God and liberty," to Cromwell. The seed planted by More in the soil of England has produced a tree under which the nations of the earth may find shelter. It is the tree of liberty! The Renaissance has again triumphed.

Lastly, I shall consider the influence of the Renaissance upon literature, science and the fine arts. Poetry has been defined as the language of passion. Poetry, it may be said, is the expression of the deepest *feelings* of our nature; and the poetry produced during any period of a nation's life gives the *feeling* of that period just as the prose writing gives the *thought*. Thus the Golden Age of Grecian literature succeeded immediately the expulsion of the Persians from Greece. Who can doubt that the glorious deeds of the Greeks in their wars against Persia inspired Thucydides, Sophocles, Euripides, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle? And what names are yet so familiar to the student as those? The Augustan age of Roman literature began when the temple of Janus was closed for the first time. Rome was at peace with all the world, and the Star in the East had appeared to announce the advent of the Christian Era. The song of Virgil and of Ovid, the history of Sallust and of Livy, gave expression to the national

thanksgiving; and the revival of learning of the sixteenth century was a general rejoicing for the overthrow of the powers of darkness and the liberation of an oppressed people. In Italy the revival of learning is seen in the paintings of Da Vinci, Paul, and Raphael; in the politics of Machiavelli, in the astronomy of Galileo, and in the poetry of Ariosto and Tasso. In Spain it produced the fiction of Cervantes and the drama of De Vega. In Portugal it breathed in the poetry of Camoëns. In the Netherlands it illuminated the canvas of Rubens and Vandyck. In France it gave fire to the withering satire of Rabelais. In Germany it inspired the theories of Copernicus and the mathematics of Kepler. In England it gave allegory to Spenser, drama to Shakespeare, and philosophy to Bacon. And to the *world* it gave poetry, more refined and breathing a spirit of loyalty to morality and religion, far surpassing anything to be found in any preceding writers; history more truthful and free from the grotesque and superstitious; philosophy more in accord with a desire for knowledge; and religion based upon the Bible and reason. And the Renaissance, like the Golden Touch of King Midas, ennobled all it reached. For the Grecian spirit of freedom breathed in every line of the Greek authors, and she inspired her students with the same ardent love of liberty—

“For standing on the Persian’s grave,
He could not deem himself a slave.”

The statesmen, philosophers and warriors of Greece had long since passed away; but, in the order of Providence, their works remained, and when Western Europe is prepared to receive the fruitful seed the Eastern Empire is destroyed, and the knowledge which is to redeem the West is carried by the Greek Fathers from the *East*. And here we see a *God in history*.

I have now completed the survey of the field that is spread out before me. I have endeavored to place in a clear light the great and prominent features of the Renaissance. My aim has been to show that history may be studied so as to cultivate thought. And may I hope I have succeeded in my effort. You have followed me faithfully over fertile plain and treacherous morass. You have heard the *hum* of students in the cities of sunny Italy; you have seen the victorious king of Spain talking with Columbus on the plain of Granada; you have marked Martin Luther as he nailed his defiance to Rome on the gate of the castle church of Wittenberg; you have dropped a tear to the memory of Catharine of Arragon, and

have blushed that the English Reformation should be begotten in open shame ; and your blood has curdled within you as you listened to the shrieks of the Huguenots on the eve of St. Bartholomew. Such are the *Landmarks of History*.

You have seen Italy reject the pearl of great price, and she is yet an infant in the family of nations ; you have observed Germany embrace Protestantism, and her reward has been rich and continuous ; you have sickened at the sight of the relentless Inquisition, and Spain is no longer respected as a nation ; you have mourned for the terrible crime of France, and the curse of St. Bartholomew still rests upon her ; and you have rejoiced with England as she cast off the shackles of Rome, and now her flag floats over an empire upon which the sun never sets. Surely a nation cannot continue to be prosperous if it neglects to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's ;" and if it forgets that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." In the deduction of such conclusions consists the educational value of history.

